



Mid Wales

Young Singers 24

The Autumn Omnibus 2024



# voice

The Magazine of Reading Male Voice Choir



## Sing in the day and sing in the night

*Canu'r dydd a chanu'r nos*

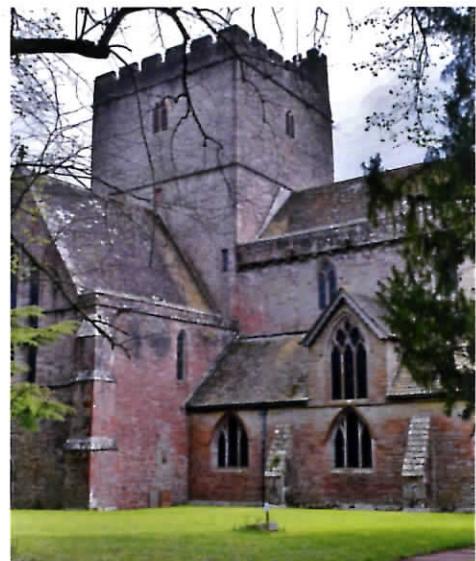
# Llandrindod Wells and Builth Wells



Above: Hotel Metropole.  
Top left: One of many afterglows. This one with Builth Wells Male Voice Choir in the hotel.

Left: Some tenors in Brecon Cathedral sitting on ancient misericordes inscribed with medieval graffiti. Behind them was a whetstone used to sharpen arrows for Agincourt.

Below: Brecon Brecon Cathedral.



'March up Snowdon  
with your woad on  
Never mind if you get  
rained or blowed on'

Not Snowdon, but there was snow. The conditions on top of Pen y Fan were described as 'brutal' by one of the brave souls who set out to climb the highest

peak in South Wales. The freezing wind blowing hard, they didn't linger and soon went in search of a hot drink.



Above: Made it – without oxygen. Martin Deaves, Denis Bredelot, Bob Castelijn, Jan and Steve Richardson on the summit of Pen y Fan.



Above: A quick afterglow in the local – some people need no encouragement.

Martin had thoughtfully arranged that our coach driver to Mid-Wales would once again be Mike who'd taken us to Cornwall in 2022, so we were guaranteed a comfortable and entertaining drive. We arrived at a vast hotel unexpectedly located in the tiny town of Llandrindod Wells to be greeted on behalf of Builth MVC by Gary Jones a former RMVC Vice-Chairman and Rob Shelton.

On the Friday morning we headed off through glorious rolling countryside, freshly greened and with lambs frolicking in the fields [memories of 'All in the April Evening'] to Brecon for a lunchtime concert in the cathedral. It looked a vast and rather gloomy building, though centuries ago its walls

Left (top to bottom): Some Welsh weather but we were not deterred; here be dragons; a little sit down in the rain; and Andrew Evans and Ryland Lee suddenly remember where they should be on Saturday night.



Above: A lovely photograph of Clive and Hayley by Mary Mantel (who took most of the photographs in this article).

Below: The concert in the Pavilion Mid Wales.

were covered with colourful paintings of biblical scenes: positively the giant screen colour TVs of the time. It was surprising to learn that back then Brecon had been the largest town in Wales. Clive had told us we'd find it a great experience to sing there and how right he was. He also had a solo spot on its beautiful piano – he'd have loved to take it home afterwards.

Saturday morning brought the opportunity to tour the surrounds of Llandrindod Wells. It turned out that prior to the latter part of the nineteenth century there had been no settlement there at all, just boggy moorland. It was the rapid growth of the practice of 'taking the waters' that had produced several large hotels, plus a railway line to service them. To enable that, the land around the hotels had been transformed with a man-made lake and a small valley surrounded by a quite extensive area of forest: Capability Brown would have been proud of it. Alas the heyday of the wells lasted only half a century and ended with the First World War. The town still has an element of its Victorian elegance in many of the buildings. It also gained notoriety again earlier this year when the police found one million

pounds worth of cannabis being grown in the three floors above the HSBC bank. So, the tradition of medical enhancements has been maintained!

Nearby was The Pavilion, where that evening we were to share a concert with Builth MVC. Hayley had caught up with us by then. Sadly, Adrian Morgan, Builth Musical Director, had a family emergency and was called away but Builth's former conductor Luned Jones came to the rescue.

The evening concert went well; soloist Megan Reece (a runner up on BBC's talent show 'The Voice') providing a good contrast to the programme. It concluded with the audience standing for a joint rendition of the Welsh National Anthem, sung of course in Welsh.

Another great 'afterglow' followed the end of the concert, with all joining in.

We had to be up early next day so some of us could get to church in Builth Wells where we sang a number of appropriate pieces – and the minister invited us back for the following Sunday. Then it was back to the hotel and off home in time for tea. Hopefully Builth Wells RMVC will make a return visit to us one day.





Top: Builth MVC and Reading Male Voice Choir sing The Evening Prayer from *Under Milk Wood*. Megan Reece, and Builth MVC conducted by Luned Jones

Above: Gary Jones, formerly of Reading Male Voice Choir, Hayley Tull and Helen Kay.

Right: Members and supporters who sang in the Sunday morning service in Builth Wells.